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Agenda items 33, 35 and 85
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Identical letters dated 17 March 1997 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Following my letters of 21, 25 and 27 February 1997 (A/51/805-S/1997/149, A/51/808-S/1997/157 and S/1997/165, respectively), I regret that I must bring the following to your immediate attention.

Less than 24 hours after the General Assembly's overwhelming adoption on 13 March 1997 of resolution 51/223, which called upon the Israeli authorities to refrain from all actions or measures, including settlement activities, which altered the facts on the ground, the Government of Israel reaffirmed its decision to proceed with the construction of a new settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim, south of East Jerusalem, and declared that work on the settlement would begin this week.

This Israeli decision serves as yet further proof of Israel's contempt for the will of the international community and its persistence in violating international law, United Nations resolutions and the agreements reached between the parties in the framework of the Middle East peace process. Some Israeli officials have made the situation even worse by making dangerous and rude statements, threatening the foundations of the peace process and even the mutual recognition between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

Obviously such an Israeli attitude is reinforced by the recurring impediment to the exercise of the appropriate mechanisms provided for in the Charter of the United Nations in similar situations. No other Member State has violated international law, relevant Security Council resolutions and other relevant United Nations resolutions as persistently as Israel has done.

The present serious situation, created by Israel's intransigence, as well as its flagrant challenges to the international community, necessitates action by the Security Council. We do hope that this time, under the current circumstances, the Council will be enabled to exercise its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations. We call upon the Security Council to do so and to demand specifically immediate and full cessation of all Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, especially the settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as an official document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 33, 35 and 85, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations